

3.0 *Environmental Analyses*

Organization of the EIR

The discussion of each of the environmental topics addressed in this EIR, as identified in Section 1.0, has been organized consistent with CEQA requirements, and tailored according to the characteristics of the Project to provide a clear and easy-to-read structure for decision makers, public agencies, and the public. The following describes the layout of the environmental analyses sections.

Environmental Setting

The environmental setting provides a description of the environmental conditions that may affect, or be affected by the Project. Site-specific environmental conditions are explained and expanded to include broader local and regional conditions, where the scope of impact analysis demands.

Regulatory Setting

The regulatory setting identifies local, regional, State, and federal agencies that have jurisdictional control over development activities in the Project vicinity. The EIR explains the presiding agency's jurisdictional power and lists the specific documents, standards, or policies that relate to environmental analyses. This section will appear only when there are applicable controlling agencies for the environmental topic.

Where existing regulations would reduce a particular environmental impact, these regulations are described in detail and factored into the analysis and characterization of remaining impact, wherever possible. If existing regulations will be required as a part of review or permitting of the Project, such regulations and permit requirements are not included as mitigation measures unless the EIR can offer specific guidance or prescribe performance standards for the regulations.

Thresholds of Significance

Thresholds of significance are the evaluation criteria by which potential impacts are measured and determined to be significant or less than significant. Impact evaluation criteria include local, State, and federal standards, where appropriate, and criteria contained in Appendix "G" of the CEQA Guidelines. These thresholds are specifically designed to measure physical environmental impacts of the Project described in Section 2.0 of this EIR.

Environmental Impact and Mitigation Measures

This section succinctly describes the various environmental impacts of the Project, and recommends mitigation measures, where appropriate.

Description of Potential Impacts: Each potential impact is described relative to the impact threshold criterion identified for that environmental topic area.¹ Each potential impact is given a summary heading and a number for future reference and to correspond with any mitigation measures.

Mitigation Measures: If feasible, a mitigation measure is prepared for each identified potential impact. Each mitigation measure is numbered for future reference and states to which impact (by number) or impacts the mitigation would apply. The level of significance following application of mitigation measures is identified as being either significant and unavoidable or less than significant.

The organization of this EIR conforms to the standards for adequacy of an EIR set forth in Section 15151 of the CEQA Guidelines, which states:

An EIR should be prepared with a sufficient degree of analysis to provide decision-makers with information which enables them to make a decision which intelligently takes account of environmental consequences. An evaluation of the environmental effects of a proposed project need not be exhaustive, but the sufficiency of an EIR is to be reviewed in the light of what is reasonably feasible. Disagreement among experts does not make an EIR inadequate, but the EIR should summarize the main points of disagreement among the experts.

Notes and References

¹ Environmental topic areas" addressed in this EIR include any of the 17 "environmental factors potentially affected," as described in Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines, that are relevant for the Project. Please refer to http://ceres.ca.gov/topic/env_law/ceqa/guidelines/Appendix_G.html. In certain instances, the EIR combines environmental topics, compared to their treatment in the CEQA Guidelines. For example, one section of the EIR addresses public services, recreation, and utilities/service systems.